

SHERMAN CENTER CONNECTIVITY STUDY

Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #1

October 23, 2025

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Mallory (Sherman) Town Hall

Attendees

- First Selectman Don Lowe
- Andrea O'Connor
- Barbara Ackerman
- Scott Murray
- Marie Mennonna
- Tim Laughlin
- Kate Frey (joined at approximately 4:30PM)
- Amal Malik, WestCOG
- Kristin Hadjstylianos, WestCOG
- Kristin Floberg, WestCOG

Meeting Summary

Kristin Floberg (WestCOG) opened the meeting, thanking the PAC for their attendance and for serving on the committee. Kristin Hadjstylianos (WestCOG) and Don Lowe started the meeting by describing the genesis of the study and how planning documents can be a useful tool when applying for grants or working with CTDOT to make changes to state highways. Kristin Floberg started the presentation and reviewed the meeting agenda. The agenda included the following topics:

- Introductions
- Study Area and Objectives
- Task Review
- Vision Statement Development Exercise
- Goals Development Exercise
- Next Steps

For further detail on the material shared, refer to the presentation. This document summarizes the discussion.

Introductions

Kristin Floberg asked the PAC members to introduce themselves and share what their interests in transportation, mobility, and safety are in relation to Sherman Center.

- Tim Laughlin started and shared that his priority is the safety of the school children using the area, particularly in the Sherman School, IGA, and fire department area. He also mentioned Sawmill Road is a popular walking route in the Study Area.
- Don Lowe shared that his priority for this study is to improve the safety for kids and highschoolers that get dropped off in the center and walk in the area after school. He would also like to investigate the feasibility of a trail to connect the library to the proposed site of the new senior center and outdoor activities at Colonial Park. He also proposed the idea of adding planters through Route 37 in the study area to control the speed of cars.
- Marie Mennonna shared that she is most interested in the safety on the two state roads (Route 37 and Route 39) in the study area for both drivers and pedestrians. The group discussed their observations of speeding in the town center and how this study can make recommendations to slow the traffic down through the village center.
- Scott Murray shared that he frequents the auto repair shop at the corner of Route 37 and 39 and finds walking around the area to be uncomfortable.
- Barbara Ackerman shared that she has enjoyed the many trails in town center, particularly the trail from Candlewood Lake to American Pie Company Restaurant, however these trails are not accessible due to the steepness for many residents. She is interested in prioritizing accessible connections to the destinations in Sherman Center.
- Andrea O'Connor shared that she would like to see Sherman Center be a vibrant village that friends and neighbors meet, feel safe, and enjoy their community.

Study Area and Objectives

- Kristin Floberg continued with the presentation sharing the study area map and excerpts from the 2023 Sherman Plan of Conservation and Development.

Task Review

- She also reviewed the five study tasks including:
 - Task 1: Project Management and Coordination – Kristin noted that the PAC will be responsible for reviewing and providing input/comments during each phase of the study.
 - Task 2: Community and Stakeholder Engagement – Kristin shared the study webpage and the four phases of public engagement. Tim suggested workshop style public engagement sessions where members of the public can provide input and react to different alternatives/treatments.
 - Task 3: Project Discovery: Kristin shared that WestCOG staff have already begun collecting and analyzing data and that more information will be shared at the next meeting.
 - Task 4: Concept Design: Kristin shared that Town Staff and PAC members will have the opportunity to provide input and comments on the various alternatives prior to the public meeting.
 - Task 5: Project Reporting: Kristin shared what will be included in the final documents.

Vision Statement and Goals Development Exercise

- Amal Malik asked the PAC to individually reflect and write down a couple of sentences on their desired study outcomes to start narrowing down what to include in the vision statement.
- Don shared that in 10 years, he hopes Sherman Center will be a place that is completely connected, including trails and slower/calmer traffic.
- Scott shared that he would like the study to preserve and honor the historic character of Sherman Center. The PAC discussed the importance of indicating to drivers that they are entering a village center or creating a “gateway” and the road should not be used as a high speed throughfare in the study area.
- Barbara shared that she would like Sherman Center to be a place where you can walk safely throughout town and access all of the community destinations.
- Andrea shared that she would like Sherman Center to be comfortable and safe environment that fosters neighbor to neighbor interaction. She also stated the importance of making Sherman Center more accessible.
- Marie shared that she would like Sherman Center to be a vibrant, active community where people can easily bicycle or walk around.
- Kristin Hadjstylianos said that WestCOG would take all these ideas and draft a cohesive vision statement and study goals for the PAC to react to.

Next Steps

- The PAC decided that the public kick-off meeting should be held around the second week of December.
- It was also discussed that Phase 2 be moved up to November 14 to reduce the risk of bad weather interfering with the event. Don and Tim recommended inviting various town staff including the Fire Chief, Public Works, Police, Emergency Management, Social Services, etc. Don offered to extend the invite to the groups identified.
- The next PAC meeting was also decided to be held at some point in January.
- Kristin Floberg asked the PAC about other key destinations in the Town Center that were not identified on the map. The PAC shared that there are many seasonal activities and events that draw people to the area including:
 - Sherman Historical Society/The Northrop House Museum occasionally hosts large events, including Revolutionary War reenactments, with off-site parking at the Library, Veteran’s Field, and sometimes Colonial Park.
 - Events at the “Town Green” near Mallory Town Hall
 - Sporting events are held at Veteran’s Field
 - The Pavillion at the Town Beach is also very popular in the summer and there is also a summer camp